(b) if so, the action taken by the Government in this regard; and

(c) the time by which the Government are likely to issue the orders in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Examined but not found commercially justified.

[English]

Replacement of Railway Track and Old Bogies in Kerala

5180. SHRI T. GOVINDAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken steps to replace the very old railway tracks, old bogies of trains and also overhaul the bogies to improve railway in Kerala;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 193 kms. of rail renewals has been sanctioned as on 1.4.1997. Out of this 115 kms. rail renewal has been targetted for completion during 1997-98. Similarly, 165 kms. of sleeper renewals have been sanctioned as on 1.4.97 out of which 111 kms. are targetted for completion in 1997-98. Passenger coaches provided on trains in Kerala region are relatively new and age-profile indicates that there are no overaged coaches in operation in this region. Further, during recent months, 160 new coaches have been inducted on trains operating in Kerala. The coaches are being given regular periodic overhaul in workshops according to prescribed norms. In addition, there is continued endeavour to bring about further improvement in the upkeep and maintenance of coaches by undertaking renovation of coaches and use of mobile jet cleaning machines at stations enroute.

(c) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Production of Mica

5181. SHRI N.J. RATHWA: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the reserves of mica are declining especially in the tribal areas of Gujarat state;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to establish mica based industries?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) and (b) The production of mica from the identified reserves is a continuous process and as such the resources are declining.

(c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Office of Senior Superintendent in Gadchiroli

5182. SHRI HANSRAJ AHIR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to open the office of Senior Superintendent of Posts in Gadchiroli District of Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) the names of districts in the country without the office of Senior Superintendent of Post;

(e) the reasons therefor;

(f) the policy of the Government in this regard; and

(g) the time by which the office of the Senior Superintendent of post is likely to be established in all the districts of Maharashtra and in the country?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) There is no such proposal under consideration at present.

(b) Question does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) The opening of an office of Senior Superintendent of Post Offices is based on norms fixed in this behalf in accordance with Staff Inspection Unit formula which is not fulfilled in the case.

(d) It is not possible to furnish the information readily particularly as new districts keep on coming up. The information is, however, being compiled.

(e) Senior Superintendent of Post Offices/Superintendent of Post Offices head a Postal Division which is not considered as an essential adjunct to a revenue district since its establishment is dependent on norms based on total postal business in the district, which varies from district to district. In case of districts having heavier postal business, there may even be more than one Postal Division.

(f) There are well formulated specific norms for setting up of Postal Divisions and action is taken to create additional Divisions in light thereof as and when the same are found fulfilled in any specific case.

(g) It is not possible to indicate any specific deadline in this behalf in view of what has been stated in reply to parts (e) and (f) above.